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2014

## Athenian Black Glass Pottery: A View from the West

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### Recommended Citation

Walsh, J. St. P. and Antonaccio, C., "Athenian Black Gloss Pottery: A View from the West." *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*, 33, 2014: 47–67. doi: 10.1111/ojoa.12026

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Walsh, J. St. P. and Antonaccio, C. (2014), Athenian Black Gloss Pottery: A View from the West. *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*, 33: 47–67. DOI: [10.1111/ojoa.12026](https://doi.org/10.1111/ojoa.12026).

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## ATHENIAN BLACK GLOSS POTTERY: A VIEW FROM THE WEST

### SUMMARY

Excavation of archaic Morgantina (ca. 700-450 BCE), Sicily, has brought to light a significant pattern in the distribution of imported Greek pottery. This pattern, which shows a preference for imports with features that referred to metal vessels, is echoed at sites around the western Mediterranean. We argue that the preference for certain types was communicated back to Greek producers, and that it also reflects the particular local interests of non-Greeks, who associated metallic features not only with wealth, but also with their own ancestral traditions.

### INTRODUCTION

This article presents results of our collaborative work on the settlement on the Cittadella hill at Morgantina, in east-central Sicily, during the period of ca. 700-450 BCE.<sup>1</sup> Our ceramics data from the site bear particularly on the relationship between pottery producers in Athens and consumers in Italy and further west. The occurrence of certain shapes at Morgantina, especially in black gloss ware, was much more pronounced than in their home market. This fact, in addition to certain aspects of the design of those shapes, suggests local expressions of preference, and implies a system of feedback that signalled to Athenian manufacturers which kinds of vases were desired by consumers in western markets. Foreign preferences stimulated Attic production and export of types whose forms referred to features found in traditional Italic shapes. The signalling system also seems to have spurred the creation at Athens of new pottery types for Sicilians and other western Mediterranean populations. It seems clear that ancient consumers in Sicily and elsewhere in Italy and the West were interested in shapes with features that imitated or referred to metalware.<sup>2</sup> The

importation of pottery vessels that made references to metal, and carried ancestral or traditional traits, might have been motivated by the possibility that those features could reward their non-Greek buyers by conferring greater status within local contexts of elite or communal commensality. Likewise, producers who adapted to supply this demand could find greater profit.

Our argument is admittedly complicated by the broad geographical distribution of the supporting evidence, which spans the Mediterranean basin, as well as by the wide range of scholarly approaches to the material. We begin by introducing the Athenian shapes found at Morgantina that first drew our attention to the phenomenon of long-distance consumer feedback, and which seem to have focused on metal prototypes. We will then examine the specific features of those vases that are reminiscent of metallic prototypes and/or display affinities with longstanding Italic pottery traditions, both of which we identify as desirable to Sicilian consumers. We will contemplate the prestige associated with those features, and the indigenous social contexts in which the use of such pottery would allow their owners to accrue greater status. At the same time, we will emphasize the benefits offered to Athenian potters by the chance to cater to specific desires of their overseas consumers.

## PRESENTATION OF SHAPES

The primary type of pottery used as evidence is the ware manufactured in Athens that was decorated with a black slip, or gloss, which formed the vast majority of exported vessels. Both figured and non-figured types are included in this group. Morgantina was captured and apparently destroyed in 459 BCE, during a period of struggle between the indigenous Sikel population and Greek communities on the coasts (Diod. Sic. XI.78.5, Sjöqvist 1973, Walsh 2011-12). Attic wares were dominant among imports for the last fifty years of Morgantina's habitation. Almost 2,000 diagnostic fragments of Attic black gloss (ABG) and approximately 160 sherds of figured Athenian pottery have been catalogued from the excavated residential areas of the settlement. In addition, one-third of the imported pottery (83 of 268 vessels) found in the published archaic tombs of the

sixth and fifth centuries originated in Athens (Lyons 1995, 33-38). While Attic black gloss was first imported to Morgantina as early as 550, half of the diagnostic pottery had production dates between 480 and 450 (Walsh 2011-2012, 125-126).

### *Stemless cups – Cástulo cups*

An ABG shape that appeared with some regularity in the Archaic deposits was the stemless cup known as the Cástulo cup. The earliest publication to draw attention to the type was that of Villard in 1959 (7-8, with profile drawings), who noted their presence in a Punic necropolis at Gouraya, on the central coast of Algeria.<sup>3</sup> Shefton later named the cup for Cástulo, a site in Spain where it was found in extraordinary numbers – over 300 examples (in Pellicer 1982 and Shefton 1997; see also, more recently, Domínguez and Sánchez 2001, 444-446). Many others have been recovered at sites in the region. At the Iberian sanctuary of Cancho Roano, in Extremadura, for example, 86% of published Attic sherds came from Cástulo cups, which made up 370 examples (Gracia 2003). This shape is characterized by noticeably thick walls, a concave outer lip profile, and a sharp offset about 2 cm below the inside of the rim. The vertical part of the foot exterior is usually decorated with a scraped groove above and torus profile below; the foot is typically unslipped except on its top and interior. Shefton (1997, 88) argued that the weight and heft of the Cástulo cup could be explained by its function as a vessel intended for export, and indeed, the shape is found throughout the western Mediterranean. According to him, the thickness of the walls and lack of a stem would ensure that the cups would reach their far-off destinations in one piece. The type was dated to ca. 470-450 by reference to an example from the *Athenian Agora* volume of Sparkes and Talcott (1970), *Agora* XII.471, though Spanish archaeologists have given some examples a date as late as the beginning of the fourth century (Domínguez and Sánchez 2001).<sup>4</sup>

Antonaccio has published a nearly intact example of this shape from the archaic settlement at Morgantina (Inv. 80-576, **Figures 1 and 2**; Antonaccio 2003). The cup was found in a monumental, probably public building, in the same context as a red-figure krater attributed to Euthymides (Neils

1995). This well-preserved specimen led us to look carefully for other Cástulo cups; the rims are easy to identify due to their distinctive offset. One hundred twenty fragments of stemless cups have been identified in the archaic settlement excavations to date, and over 80% of stemless rims (70 out of 87) can be identified as Cástulo cups.<sup>5</sup> In the earliest phases of the succeeding classical settlement, stemless cups were the second most common shape in ABG, and almost half of these were Cástulo cups (13 out of 27 rims; Walsh 2006, 141-142). A study in preparation for publication by Walsh of data from 233 Greek and non-Greek sites in Portugal, Spain, France, Switzerland, and Germany where Greek vases have been found showed 34 settlements with at least one Cástulo cup. Of these 34, none were Greek colonies (Walsh forthcoming).

### *Cup-skyphoi*

Our investigation of cups displaying sharp offsets inside the rim led to the identification of a second and related type. This shape also had an offset inside, about 2 cm below the rim, but with a significantly deeper profile than a stemless cup, and often a concave moulding on the rim exterior (**Figures 3 and 4**). These were cup-skyphoi of a type not illustrated by drawings in Sparkes and Talcott's publication.<sup>6</sup> Ninety-three diagnostic cup-skyphos fragments were found in the archaic settlement at Morgantina, and another fourteen fragments are probably attributable to this shape. One possible example (it may be a Cástulo instead; Inv. 90-1, **Figure 5**) was executed in the red-figure technique.<sup>7</sup> The cup-skyphos type with concave or straight rim exterior and offset inside appeared in a variety of sizes at Morgantina, from under 7 cm in height and 10 cm in rim diameter (Inv. 95-137) to enormous versions with diameters up to 23 cm (95-128). In all examples where the foot was preserved, it was moulded, reserved on at least part (or even all) of the foot exterior, with a scraped groove ranging from a few millimetres to almost a centimetre in height. Under the foot, the resting surface and underside were reserved, while the foot interior was glossed. Added red (miltos) is often found on the reserved parts of the foot, and a concentric circle-and-dot motif painted at the centre of the underside. The points of attachment for canted bell handles were placed so that their

top part was just below the ridge whence the concave flaring of the rim springs. The highest parts of the handles did not rise above the rim. The handles were uniformly glossed on the exterior and reserved on the interior, with a reserved handle panel. The lip was often thickened, especially on smaller examples (e.g., 57-2990).

Following Shefton's designation of the thick-walled stemless cup with offset inside as the Cástulo cup, we refer to the cup-skyphos with concave lip and offset inside as the Morgantina cup. This rubric seems appropriate given the high concentration of this type at the site, although as with the Cástulo, the Morgantina cup was actually distributed across the western Mediterranean (see below). Similar to the Cástulo cup, the offset on a Morgantina cup's interior is usually found between two and three cm below the rim edge. The offset is up to four or five mm deep, clearly visible to the viewer of one of these vessels. Unlike the Cástulo cup, however, the Morgantina cup did not have noticeably thicker walls than other cup-skyphoi, except at the offset itself. Aside from the reserved areas already noted on the foot and handles, the rest of the vessel was completely glossed. Like several other ABG shapes popular at Morgantina and elsewhere, this type was apparently uncommon at Athens.

In sum, at least 86 Cástulo and Morgantina cup rims have been identified in the material from Morgantina's sixth-fifth century settlement. As will be seen shortly, it appears that this number is greater than at other Italian sites, especially on Sicily. The appearance of similar features on such a large proportion of both stemless cups and cup-skyphoi thus was striking, and seems strongly indicative of both a local preference for those features and a market that was attractive to Athenian workshops: Morgantina had interest and purchasing power, a point confirmed by the very large quantity of ABG at the site.

#### *Other sites*

Similar vessels have been found in several other parts of Sicily and further afield. At Selinous, twenty stemless cups with offset inside ("orlo staccato") were published from the

Manicalunga necropolis (Kustermann Graf 2002, 276 and Tav. CXXII). This number apparently includes cup-skyphoi, nine of which (Group 1a) are represented by a drawing of one example (inv. no. 100/O360). All nine had a rim diameter of around 15 cm, perhaps evidence of a set, or a single workshop supplying the buyers for Selinous (Kustermann Graf dated the Selinous cups to the second or third quarter of the fifth century).<sup>8</sup> We note that two more cup-skyphoi from the Manicalunga tombs had flaring concave lips, a preference to which we will return below.<sup>9</sup>

Monte Maranfusa, a small site located in the Belice river valley of western Sicily, not far inland from Selinous, yielded stemless cups and perhaps also cup-skyphoi with sharp offsets inside (Del Vais 2004, 336-338 and fig. 282). The cup-skyphoi that were preserved (G89-96) uniformly featured flaring concave rims.<sup>10</sup> Two vessels (G97 and G98) were certainly stemless cups; another (G99) was not well-preserved enough to determine the depth of its bowl so that it could be identified as either stemless or cup-skyphos. These comparanda, which reflect the phenomena we recognized at Morgantina, but on a smaller scale, are particularly important because the site is a uniquely well-published example of a hellenising indigenous settlement in this period, and it presents a corresponding pattern in western Sicily to that found in the centre at Morgantina. Likewise, the Punic island settlement of Mozia (off the west coast of Sicily) preserved at least one probable example of an offset-inside cup-skyphos. Michelini (2002, 166 and Tav. 1) referred to this example as the sole representative of her Type 2, identifying it as a stemless cup (and thus a *Cástulo*), though the profile drawing seems deeper and closer to the Morgantina cup shape.

Turning to the Italian peninsula, vessels similar to the Morgantina type were discovered in significant numbers at Gravisca, the port of the Etruscan city Tarquinia, which was well connected to Athens by trade links (Demetriou 2013). Valentini's Type 10 cup, defined by a flaring rim and sharp edge inside, was relatively common, represented by 85 fragments, of which 49 were rims (1993, 24-25 and Tav. 4-5). Valentini divided the type into four subcategories, with Type 10A (34 fragments at Gravisca) most similar to the relatively broad but shallow profiles typically encountered at Morgantina. Type 10A had the widest rim diameter of the Gravisca cup-skyphoi, up



to a maximum of 19.3 cm, while the other subtypes could be as small as 13 cm. Valentini dated Types 10B-D by their contexts to around 480, while 10A was placed around 450.

Three sites in southern Italy also revealed Morgantina cups: Elea, Vico Equense, and Kaulonia. At Elea, Gassner (2003, 52-53) created a typology for ABG cup-skyphoi with offset rim and with concave rim. She referred to these as "Schalenskyphos 4," of which there were three catalogued examples. Gassner's "Fußlose Schale mit abgesetztem Rand" (2003, 48-50) should also be included in this discussion. While she defined that form as a stemless cup – in fact, the type "mit abgesetztem Rand" appears to be equivalent to the Cástulo cup form, though she did not cite any Iberian comparanda – her first two examples (subtype 1) appear to be cup-skyphoi instead.<sup>11</sup> A cemetery at Vico Equense, on the south coast of the Bay of Naples, revealed two Morgantina cups, one with a thickened rim, and the other relatively thin, as well as two Cástulo cups (Necropoli di via Nicotera black gloss nos. 29-30; Bonghi Jovino 1982, 69-70, Tav. 37 1.2 and 1.5, Tav. 111.2 and 111.5). Finally, Tréziny (1989, 55-59 and fig. 36-37) published profiles of at least two offset-inside rims from Athenian cup-skyphoi found at Kaulonia (numbers 110 and 114 in his catalogue), on the Ionian Sea coast, together with another four rims with concave lips. He also published seven examples of Cástulo cup rims (nos. 133-139).<sup>12</sup>

The most complete comparanda for the Morgantina cup type in ABG – perhaps the finest examples anywhere in the Mediterranean – were two cups found in an indigenous necropolis at Los Castellones de Ceal, in Andalucía (Museo Arqueológico de Jaén, one numbered A-112 (**Figure 6**), the other without a number; Blanco 1959, 111; Trías 1967, 483 and fig. 144-145; Domínguez and Sánchez 2001, 234 and figs. 129-130). Trías gave them a date in the first half of the fourth century, which seems likely to us. Other examples appeared in red-figure and black gloss at Ullastret in Catalonia (Picazo 1977, 62-68 and 106-107; see esp. no. 178, fig. 1.7 and no. 176-177, pl. XVII; also n. 6-7 above).

Finally, two cups in metal can provide points of comparison with the Morgantina cup, and a third seems very close to the Cástulo type. First is the well-known silver cup-skyphos in the

Ashmolean collection (1885.486). This vessel, which has a concave lip and offset inside, was found at Nymphaion, site of the famous kurgan burials, in the Ukraine. Strong (1966, 85) specifically compared its shape to “clay vessels...around 400 BC.” Oliver (1977, 31) concurred: “[it] can easily be matched in pottery.” The other two vessels, a cup-skyphos and a stemless cup (both bronze; **Figures 7 and 8**), were also from the late fifth century, and were found as part of a hoard at Votonosios, near Metsovo in Epiros, in 1939 (Verdélis 1949, esp. 19 n. 2; Petsa 1952). The hoard’s precise ancient context is unfortunately not known, since it was discovered during road work (Vocotopoulou 1975, 730, though see also 786, where she suggests that the vases might have formed part of a votive deposit). These two examples, today in Ioannina, had sharply concave rims (Vocotopoulou 1975, 761-764). The stemless cup has a decisive offset inside, while the cup-skyphos appears to have a small but visible raised line where the lip joins the body.<sup>13</sup> The stemless cup is possibly a unique comparandum in metal for the Cástulo type, though the handles indicate a late date.

#### LOCAL TRADITIONS

We have already suggested above that some of the attributes of imported ABG at these (and other) western Mediterranean sites can be linked to both local ceramic and metalworking traditions. In Sicily, local traditions in the design of vases used for feasting seem to have existed perhaps even from the Early Bronze Age. They continued into the Iron Age and the period of contact and interaction between indigenous groups and Greeks, and beyond. Although few metal vessels survive relative to the enormous quantity of pottery, it will become clear that Sicilian societies, as elsewhere in Italy, gave primacy to metal vessels. Certain design characteristics show unequivocally that features of metal vessels were imitated in clay. Among these attributes are carinated profiles (and other ridges; see below), high-swung handles, clay “rivets,” and other vestiges of metal vessel predecessors that often had deep local histories.

Forming vases out of metal required a variety of techniques quite different from those used in shaping clay, meaning that the appearance of metal features in clay is not a function of potting traditions having an effect on metalwork (Knudsen 1961, 14-44). Before the sixth century BCE, vases were typically hammered out of lumps of metal; later, casting and lathing sections of a vase and hammering, welding, or riveting the sections together became the norm (Hill 1947, 249-252). At the points where joins were made – often where countering curves, difficult to produce through casting, met – the surface of the vessel would thicken through hammering or soldering. The thickened area would often be sharpened by hammering into a decorative ridge, or carination.<sup>14</sup> Carinations, although found in ceramics, are therefore a feature specifically associated with metal vessels. Other features found quite often on metal cups and bowls include delicate high-swung strap handles, false rivets, and ostentatiously flaring rims, are more viable in the relatively flexible and resilient medium of metal than in easily fractured clay (Vickers et al. 1986). Thus, the appearance in pottery of features suited to metalwork, represents a choice on the part of potters, driven by the preferences of consumers (a point already signalled by Lamb in 1929 (186)). These preferences were not simply the mirror of what was happening in the home market: a thorough study of findspots for Athenian figured cup-skyphoi revealed that over 80% were found outside of Athens (Hatzidakis 1984, 22).

In the Archaic and Classical period, it is very easy to find numerous examples of carinated rims and high-swung handles on Iron Age shapes in Italy and Sicily, especially on cups, but extending to larger shapes such as basins. There were examples from Morgantina in both the settlement and cemeteries, and the deep influence of metal can be found in the Archaic but locally made vessels that co-existed with Greek imports (and colonial imitations). Dipper cups with a carinated profile and high-swung handle were very popular, and appeared in a variety of fabrics and decorative schemes, from impasto with burnished surface to the local 'Siculo-geometric' fabric with matt-painted decoration. Some seventh-century examples were clearly imitating metal in their dark, thin, hard fabrics with sharp carinations and a dark slip. There were also overt imitations of

larger metal vessels of Greek design, for example *dinoi* with pendant ring handles that are imitated in cooking wares. In general, then, the preference for carinated shapes was quite pronounced.<sup>15</sup>

That such patterns transcend Morgantina, or indeed Sicily, can be seen in the prevalence of these design features in Italy as well from the Neolithic to the Archaic period. The clearest examples can be found in Etruria, where the Etruscan shapes known as Nikosthenic amphorai and kyathoi appeared in Athenian fabrics. As Eisman pointed out, these vessels are clear examples of a pattern of feedback between Etruria and Greece, such that examples of the Etruscan prototypes must have travelled to Athens to be copied. Athenian potters must have recognized that Etruscan consumers (specifically at Caere, in the case of the Nikosthenic amphorai, which have mostly been found there) might be doubly pleased by the appearance of desirable Greek decorations on their own recognizable shapes (Eisman 1974, 1975; Vickers and Gill 1994).

The precise mechanisms of the feedback that was responsible for the shapes and their distribution in the western Mediterranean cannot, in all likelihood, be completely clarified on present evidence (Gill 1994, Arafat and Morgan 1994, Lawall 1998). Gill (1994, 102), in particular, criticized Eisman's "ceramo-centric" model, arguing that metal vessels would have been far more important in trade from Etruria to Greece than clay.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, both the Nikosthenic amphora and kyathos have metallic features which make it likely that they took some, if not all their cues from metal antecedents.<sup>17</sup> Even if there was no specific metal prototype of the Nikosthenic amphora, though, these features were deployed precisely because they copied the kinds of features found on metal vases (as has already been shown to have happened throughout Italy and Sicily). Likewise, the high-swung handles of kyathoi seem not only metallic, but also in keeping with Italic tradition. In addition, kyathos handles are occasionally decorated with plastic decoration: a rivet-like knob or twisted cone on the top, or an "appliqué," e.g., a palmette or ivy leaf (as on New York 21.88.93 or Hamburg 1965.60; Eisman 1975, 79-81, True 2006).

Elsewhere in Italy, in the region of Puglia (ancient Daunia), we can point to the olla (also known by the name *troxella* or *nestoris*), a shape with a rounded bottom, rather like the Greek *dinos*

but a sharply articulated and thin horizontal rim and, often, vertical handles or plastic attachment. Remarkably, this type was imitated in red figure by Polygnotos, the early classical Athenian painter, who decorated a pair of these vessels now in the Getty Museum (inv. 81.AE.183.1-7) with figures on the rim and a black gloss body. As the findspot(s) of this pair are unfortunately not known, we cannot be certain that they came from a South Italian market, but it seems likely that they were commissioned by an Italian (Daunian) buyer, or at least that they were intended for such a buyer, who selected an ancestral shape but – in a transcultural move – wanted it to be decorated it with Attic red-figure imagery on a black surface (Antonaccio 2005 with references). Related objects would be another pair of vases unique in shape, called “fennel stands” but of unknown use, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (inv. 65.11.5-14 and 1980.537). These objects, like the transculturated Daunian vessels, were decorated in red figure, and are attributed to the Euegides Painter. The potter may have been Nikosthenes or, tantalizingly, Sikanos (according to von Bothmer), emphasizing the possible South Italian connection (True 2006: 240-257, cat. no. 72, 73; S. Hemingway in Padgett, ed. 2003: 280-81, no. 71 = MMA 65.11.14). These objects have no known parallels in the Attic repertoire but the shape, again, derives from an Etruscan context.

## MEANINGS

### BG and metal

Vickers, Francis, and Gill proposed the indebtedness of Greek, and especially Attic, sixth- and fifth-century pottery to metalwork. Their efforts were motivated by a desire to clarify the relative economic value of metal vessels to ceramic vessels in antiquity, and to counter prevailing views of Attic figured wares in particular as artistic masterpieces (Vickers and Gill 1994, 33-54). While the value of a metal cup closely correlated with its weight, it also had value as an object of display that could confer status on its owner (Vickers and Gill 1994, 40, relying on Pollux 10.85). Hence, according to these authors, the prestige of metal explains the shapes and decoration of Attic

pottery: they imitate gold and silver. While the work of Vickers and Gill has been divisive regarding the value of ceramic vessels in antiquity, it tends to bolster our case for the importance of metal vases and the relationship between their appearance and some design features of the ABG found at Morgantina and elsewhere. We, however, also discern the very important aspect of the reinforcing qualities of time and identity— what we might call ancestral preferences or values – in the reasons for choosing or valuing some of these designs, not just the inherent priority of metal's economic value for prestige. Although black gloss did not mimic precious metal such as tarnished silver (Boardman 1987), the semi-reflective quality of this surface seems clearly responsible for the extraordinary popularity across the classical Mediterranean of wares with that surface finishing. If they did not reproduce metal exactly, their sheen was at least “metallic,” and the features of their shapes already noted support this view.

#### *Etruscan-style kantharoi*

A comparison of several different kinds of vessels will help illustrate further the importance of metal references on ceramic vases, and especially how vases with those references demonstrate the links of trade and communication between Greece and the rest of the Mediterranean, especially Italy. One vessel type produced at Athens (and elsewhere in Greece) that not only had origins in Etruria, but specifically in an Etruscan metal shape was a kind of kantharos. Sixty years ago, Courbin (1953; see also Brijder 1988) showed that the kantharos name, typically used for a deep cup with two vertical handles and a foot, actually described two different kinds of vessels that were derived from wholly separate traditions. In both cases, however, these types were ultimately related to metal precursors. The type of kantharos that was derived from Etruscan models featured high-swung handles that rose well above the rim and a sharp carination where the curve of the shallow bowl met the tall lipless rim. According to Courbin, this shape, which appeared in Greek ceramic production as early as 580, copied almost exactly a shape that appeared in bucchero by the third quarter of the seventh century. The examples made in Etruria often include applied decoration in

the form of a row of “rivets” running around the carination, testifying to the ceramic vessel’s debt to a metal prototype, or at least the desire to make it seem metallic. The shape became popular in Athens and especially Boeotia (where it became favored for inclusion with burials). The Etruscan-style kantharos soon became so closely connected to the luxuries of the symposium in Athens that it was a common part of the Athenian iconography of Dionysos and Herakles at banquet by the middle of the sixth century (Carpenter 1986). Perhaps, too, it could be suggested that the kantharos is Dionysos’ cup because both it and he were foreign, seen by Athenians as originating outside the Greek world. It is in this context that Kritias’ comments about the importance of Etruscan metal (n. 16 above) are best taken. A particularly fine example of the Etruscan-style kantharos in metal is a silver cup of Greek manufacture with gold-figure decoration that was found in a Thracian tumulus at Duvanli in Bulgaria (today in the Plovdiv Archaeological Museum; Vickers, Impey, and Allan 1986, Plate 4).

Metal vessels from Etruria were not the only ones that made their way into the ceramic medium at home and at Athens. Miller has extensively described the appearance in Attic black gloss production of shapes that, in her nomenclature, are adoptions, adaptations, or derivations of Achaemenid Persian metal shapes (Miller 1993 and 1997, esp. Ch. 6; also Strong 1966, 75-77 and Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 15 n. 29). While earlier scholars claimed that the emergence of the “Achaemenidizing” cups and bowls at Athens was caused by the influx of loot taken at Plataia in 479, Miller argued that the beginning of adoption and adaptation dated earlier -- to the later part of the sixth century (Miller 1993, 137-138). Using Achaemenid vessels, or vessels that were clearly Achaemenid in style, according to Miller, would have been recognized by Athenians as an important marker of elite status, in Greece or elsewhere. We note that Berlin and Lynch (2002) raised a particularly interesting corollary to Miller’s argument concerning cultural influences on pottery across the Mediterranean, i.e. Atticizing *Achaemenid* pottery found at Persian-period Troy.

*Greek-style kantharoi*

The other type of kantharos distinguished by Courbin, with smaller handles than the Etruscan type, which do not rise above the rim, had Greek origins. One Attic cup in this shape (95-180; **Figure 9**) has also been found in the archaic settlement at Morgantina. The cup, with a rim diameter of about 14 cm, was decorated with an extremely glossy slip, beautifully applied, but misfired gray or greenish in certain areas. It had an everted rim and two small vertical handles rising to join the rim, similar to *Agora* XII.625, dating ca. 550. Brann showed that comparable cups with only one vertical handle, but a similar profile, could be found as early as the Protogeometric period. She also noted the influence of metal: “[In the seventh century, t]he cups look increasingly as if copied from metal models, the fabric being thin and firm and the glaze firm, glossy and approaching classical black glaze” (1962, 52-53). Brann felt sure that one particular two-handled cup (*Agora* VIII.152) had a metal prototype, as a very similar vessel was depicted on the Protoattic Eleusis amphora (1962, 49). At the same time, the shape of 95-180’s handles are reminiscent of two so-called kyathoi in Siculo-Geometric fabric recovered from an indigenous necropolis at Villasmundo, near Syracuse, that was in use from the eighth through the sixth centuries (Voza 1973b, 58-59). While the kyathoi lack an everted rim like 95-180, their overall forms present striking similarities.

The most interesting features of the kantharos found at Morgantina are reserved triangles found on the tops of the vertical handles (**Figure 10**). We do not know of any published parallels for this decoration on kantharoi, but an identical treatment is found on ABG mugs made in the fifth century. In fact, two mugs found in a tomb less than 40 km from Morgantina, at the hellenising indigenous site of Sabucina, also have reserved triangles on their handles.<sup>18</sup> Two Attic examples in the British Museum show similar treatments: one found at Rhodes with red-figure decoration (BM E 568) has a reserved handle like the two from Sabucina, while another found at Capua has an extraordinary frieze of stamped figures and an actual moulded double-handle (BM G90, Sparkes 1968). The stamped decorations on BM G90 – which are clearly evocative of hammered or impressed decorations on metal vessels – were linked by Sparkes to two kantharos variants, called



“cantharoid kotylai” by Beazley, which were decorated with identical stamps.<sup>19</sup> These cups (Boston 01.8023, from Naples; and Brussels A741, from Nola) have everted rims and Italian provenances.

The purpose of the handle decoration on all of the mugs and the Morgantina kantharos seems clear: to copy the appearance of metal cups with double vertical handles that split from one another as they joined an everted rim.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF ABG SHAPES IN THE WEST

### *Consumption*

Walsh (2011-12 and forthcoming) has argued elsewhere that the patterns of distribution that have been found for imported pottery at Morgantina and other sites were the result not only of the availability of products, but also of a complex process of decision-making. On the one hand, buyers evaluated purely economic criteria such as price, utility, and need during each purchase. At the same time, as other scholars have recognized, buying foreign goods requires the purchaser to create a new set of meanings for those goods – to find a place for imports within existing social and cultural structures. Dietler (e.g., 1999, 2010) adopted the term “consumption” to describe such transformations of meaning. The development of new meanings was, of course, conditioned by the very structures into which the imported objects had to be integrated. The foreignness of an import carries with it the implication that these goods were probably, on some level at least, prestigious novelties. The added value connected to consumption of an imported vase is unlikely to have been related to its functional aspects, as local copies could presumably mimic those qualities relatively easily (see, for example, the single instance of an imitation Cástulo cup found at Cancho Roano (unnumbered, Badajoz Museum)).

The extent to which drinking practices followed those outlined for the Greek-style drinking party known as the symposium is not known, but there are some signs that certain sympotic behaviors were practiced, at least by some people, at Morgantina. The monumental public building mentioned earlier as containing an almost-intact Cástulo cup and the Euthymides krater (among

many other drinking vessels) was constructed in the second half of the sixth century. The four square rooms that comprised its lower level were used for storage, and the upper rooms that are no longer preserved might well have served for ritualized drinking (Antonaccio 1997). Graffiti on many drinking vessels show awareness of Greek customs: on the interior of an Attic kylix, the Sikel word "PIBE" ("Drink!"), written in the Greek alphabet; on the neck of a Lakonian krater, a Sikel female personal name, Kupara, that could also be read as a bilingual pun (and seems to indicate a female role in the drinking; Antonaccio and Neils 1995; Antonaccio 1999; Antonaccio 2003). Even funerary architecture and grave goods made reference to symposia, as stonecut klinai for reclining while dining were discovered in several chamber tombs, and pottery associated with drinking was common (Lyons 1995). Yet differences also emerged: women were buried in tombs that had klinai, and much of the pottery deposited is in the indigenous Siculo-Geometric tradition. Wine was not necessarily the beverage consumed at commensal occasions – mead or hydromel are other strong possibilities. References to Sikel language and religion indicate that there were quite active non-Greek participants in group commensality, and the restricted range of imported shapes imply that a different set of equipment was being used than would be expected in Athens, or even on the Sicilian coast in Greek colonies. The selective adoption of certain shapes rather than others shows the active expression of preference by consumers – buyers at Morgantina clearly did not want all the shapes that were available to them. For example, they imported fewer pouring vessels, a rather hybrid drinking assemblage must have been in use, involving a mix of imported Greek/colonial shapes, traditional local shapes, and even traditional vessels from outside Morgantina (Antonaccio 2001; imports of indigenous ceramics in non-local fabrics and decoration is the subject of ongoing study).

The best explanation for Sicilian interest in Athenian pottery must be sought elsewhere, specifically in the ability of the imported vessels to transmit signals about the status of the owner to an audience that was equipped to receive, understand, and respond to those signals in a positive way. Bourdieu (1984) long ago noted the ways in which shared attitudes and tastes serve to

delineate social groups, and Neiman (1999) has shown how otherwise wastefully large expenditures on luxuries can actually increase access to more and better mates and resources. The host of a feast who possessed the most fashionable or “right” kinds of tableware, and who used them properly, could be judged by guests to know the rules of elite behaviour – to be a member of the club, so to speak – just as today, the “cultured” wealthy of the West set themselves apart from the newly rich or merely middle-class by demonstrating their understanding of which shape of glass to use for serving a rare and extravagantly priced variety of wine, or which fork and knife to use at a certain point during a special meal. These largely arbitrary rules, and the equipment created to satisfy them, help to define how status is contested and won in the public arena of commensality (Stahl 2002). In addition, hosts, or perhaps local leaders, could set a trend and increase their prestige by innovating within this system, introducing a new type or acquiring a particularly impressive example (*e.g.*, the Euthymides krater).

So how did this phenomenon of expressed preference manifest itself at Morgantina? Just as in Etruria, we find that while there was great interest in black gloss pottery from Athens generally, shapes that were related to ancestral or metallic forms were particularly desirable. This should come as little surprise: consumers who wanted to gain status through the display of expensive table wares could probably do so most effectively by using vessels that were easily associated with existing (and long-standing) tastes. The surface finishing, carinations, offsets, and concave flaring lips of Cástulo and Morgantina cups satisfied consumers in Sicily and elsewhere in the Mediterranean because of their stylistic proximity to local traditions and interests. Athenian potters and merchants of these wares responded to the demand by directing trade in vessels with the desired traits and others like them towards the West.

## CONCLUSION

We close our discussion by reference to one last Athenian vessel. It is a largely intact cup found by excavators of the Athenian agora in 1996 (P32631; Camp 1999; **Figure 11**). It was found in

a refuse pit on the north side of the Eridanos River, together with other cups and some one-handlers. Camp identified the vase as a cup-skyphos.<sup>20</sup> It had a “molded ring foot, canted handles, [and] offset rim inside and out,” which matches our examples of Cástulo and Morgantina cups (Camp 1999, 274). The most unusual aspect of this Athenian specimen, however, was the graffito incised on its underside, which Camp interpreted as the name of its owner: XENON (**Figure 12**). While we cannot know if the graffito refers to its owner or maker, the possible connection of this Athenian cup to a foreigner (*xenos*) living at Athens is a fascinating prospect, given our interest in this shape and its appeal to Sicilian consumers. Some names among the potters and painters of Athens are similarly suggestive: *e.g.*, Amasis, Lydos (who often used the definite article with his name, accentuating his ethnicity), Brygos, Thrax, Syriskos, and even Sikanos and Sikelos (Robertson 1992, 137). If the cup belonged to a foreigner in Athens, perhaps he was expressing his preference for this shape because of his cultural background.

At the same time, the proportions of the XENON cup place it somewhere between those of the standard cup-skyphos and stemless cup.<sup>21</sup> The hybrid nature of the XENON cup highlights how similar these shapes are, and it could probably be argued that the distinction between cup-skyphoi and stemless cups is largely semantic (as suggested by Roberts and Glock, quoted earlier). On the other hand, the fact remains that our survey of the western Mediterranean showed that Cástulo cups were particularly concentrated in Spain, while our new type, the Morgantina cup was more common in Sicily and Italy. It may be too soon for us to claim on the basis of current evidence that these distribution patterns reflect more subtle differences in consumer preference and feedback, but the possibility seems to be a strong one. In the end, the XENON cup’s hybridity can at least stand as a kind of synecdoche for the mixture of influences on the design of Athenian cups exported across the Mediterranean.

The features of the pottery studied in this paper became common – that is to say, commercially successful – because they could be used to claim allegiance to a group: leisured participants in commensal drinking. It is perhaps tempting to label the buyers of Athenian pottery

at Morgantina as being, or desiring to be, “cosmopolitan” for their interest in products from far-off centers, but this interpretation presumes that the Athenian (or, more generally, Greek, or simply “foreign”) origin of the cups was necessarily an important part of what made them coveted. Probably the Athenian “brand” did carry some value, but if it were the most significant factor, a broader and less discriminate distribution of shapes, especially those displaying images, would have been discovered at Morgantina, as it has on the Sicilian coast. Instead, as we hope we have demonstrated, consumer interests must be investigated from a local perspective first, in order to identify the concerns and cultural histories of the vessels’ buyers.

Dietler has carefully examined how commensality can be used to unite or divide participants, to maintain status among peers or define one’s peers (2001, 77). In his “diacritical” mode of feasting (2001, 85-86), the employment of specialized equipment is one way in which participants can set themselves apart from outsiders. While Greek use of kraters, amphorai, oinochoai, psykters, and all sorts of cups during the symposion helped to create a sense of the banquet as a band of brothers (as noted in frequent literary references), at Morgantina, the use of Athenian cups that resembled traditional metal vessels, alongside shapes of various traditions in different wares could also signal alliance between feasters. The signal that was sent emphasized a shared cultural heritage (the shape of local vessels) and the value and prestige of metal.

### **Acknowledgements**

The authors are indebted to their colleagues in the Morgantina expedition, especially Jenifer Neils, for their suggestions throughout the writing of this article, and Chris Williams for his photographic work. We are also grateful to John Camp and the staff of the Athenian Agora excavations for making their material available for study. Any errors are the responsibility of the authors alone.

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## CAPTIONS

Figure 1. Drawing of Cástulo cup from Morgantina (inv. 80-576). Drawing by Joann Boscarino.

Figure 2. Photograph of Cástulo cup from Morgantina (inv. 80-576). Photograph by Chris Williams.

Figure 3. Drawing of offset-inside cup-skyphos ("Morgantina cup") from Morgantina (inv. 09-11).

Rim diam.: 0.10 m. Drawing by Justin Walsh.

Figure 4. Drawing of offset-inside cup-skyphos ("Morgantina cup") from Morgantina (inv. 95-128).

Rim diam.: 0.23 m. Drawing by Joann Boscarino.

Figure 5. Photograph of red-figure Morgantina cup from Morgantina (inv. 90-1). Photograph by

Chris Williams.

Figure 6. Photograph of Morgantina cup found at Los Castellones de Ceal (Jaén), Spain (inv. A-112).

Photograph by Justin Walsh.

Figure 7. Photograph of Morgantina cup in bronze, found at Votonosios (Epiros), Greece; now in the Ioannina Archaeological Museum. Photograph by Elizabeth Baltes.

Figure 8. Photograph of Cástulo cup in bronze, found at Votonosios (Epiros), Greece; now in the Ioannina Archaeological Museum. Photograph by Elizabeth Baltes.

Figure 9. Drawing of kantharos from Morgantina (95-180). Drawing by Justin Walsh.

Figure 10. Photograph of handle treatment on kantharos from Morgantina (95-180). Photograph by Chris Williams.

Figure 11. Stemless/cup-skyphos from the Athenian agora (P32631). Photograph by Justin Walsh.

Figure 12. Inscription "XENON" on the underside of Athenian agora P32631. Photograph by Justin Walsh.



## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> The authors of the present article, along with Jenifer Neils and Shelley Stone, are preparing the publication of the archaic settlement for the *Morgantina Studies* series, published by Princeton University Press.

<sup>2</sup> Mimicry, as defined in postcolonial theory, was probably not at work, since mimicry in a colonial context is a strategy that intentionally destabilizes colonial authenticity.

<sup>3</sup> Because Athenian pottery was absent from tombs at Carthage, Villard hypothesized that these cups were signs of a trade route from Sicily that bypassed that city, serving the far west of the Mediterranean instead (12-13). Shefton agreed (1982, 360). Greater detail about the specific burials where these cups were discovered, and their occupants, would certainly be of enormous interest to our study.

<sup>4</sup> Sparkes and Talcott (1970, 101-102 with notes, and Fig. 5) included four other examples of large stemless cups with inset lips in their catalogue, but in the drawings, only 471 has the requisite thickened walls.

<sup>5</sup> Only one stemless cup, in Lakonian fabric, was found in the archaic cemeteries (Inv. 61-826; Lyons 1995, 48). Close examination of the cup's interior revealed a thin molded ridge about 2 cm below the lip, similar to an offset, though not nearly so pronounced.

<sup>6</sup> Although *Agora* XII.578 (ca. 480 BCE) is often cited by scholars at other sites as a comparandum for the type also identified at Morgantina, that volume only shows a photograph of the cup's exterior. A profile drawing of the same cup in a later publication shows that while it has a concave lip, there is no offset (Roberts and Glock 1986, fig. 14, no. 41). True comparanda for this shape in unpainted black gloss are Geneva 8899 (published in *CVA Switzerland* (Geneva 1) 26.6, with profile drawing, Pl. B.7); Oxford 418 (*CVA Great Britain* 3 (Oxford 1) 48, 4); possibly also Stuttgart KAS 256 (*CVA Germany* (Stuttgart 1) 36.10) and Martin von Wagner-Museum, Würzburg 4952 (Möbius 1962, 50-51). In red-

figure: Berlin F2591, from Nola, attributed to the Penthesilea Painter (published in CVA DDR 3 (Berlin 1) 33, 1-3); New York 96.18.76, from Capua, also attributed to the Penthesilea Painter; Oxford 520, attributed to Epiktetos (published in CVA Great Britain 3 (Oxford 1) 41, 9-10; and Barcelona 578, from Ampurias, unattributed (Trías de Arribas 1967, 156 and Pl. LXXXIII, 7). See also n. 7 below.

<sup>7</sup> The red-figure cup-skyphos with offset inside from Morgantina, inv. 90-1, will be included in Neils' discussion of figured pottery from the Cittadella settlement. Blázquez (1975, 111 and fig. 55.1) has published a red-figure example of a very probable cup of the same type with ivy-leaf on the exterior from the Ibérica de los Patos necropolis at Cástulo. At Ullastret, a Cástulo cup was found with the ivy-leaf motif on the rim interior (Inv. 1519; Cabrera Bonet and Sánchez Fernández 2000). A concave rim cup-skyphos with this motif on the rim exterior was found at La Illeta dels Banyets (no. 149; García Martín 2003, 179 and fig. 25). Another red-figure cup (inv. 4-XV, Soc. Archéologique de Montpellier), found at Castelnaud-le-Lez in Languedoc, was identified by Jully (1983, Vol. 2.1, 801) as a Cástulo type, but in a published image (Jacobsthal 1930, fig. 10) it appears more likely to be a cup-skyphos instead. It was attributed by Shefton to the Codrus Painter and dated to around 425.

<sup>8</sup> Such a pattern is clearer in the case of four Shuvalov Painter oinochoai found together in a single tomb at the inland site of Vassallaggi (Martelli 1958).

<sup>9</sup> The published examples are 35/O413 and 88/O414 (Kustermann Graff 2002, 277 and Tav. CXXV).

<sup>10</sup> To Del Vais' category of cup-skyphoi from Monte Maranfusa, we might also add G44 (which she called a "boccaletto" (p. 326 and fig. 277)). This cup bears a strong resemblance to some smaller cup-skyphoi found on Cittadella, including 09-11, 09-70, and 09-99a-b.

<sup>11</sup> Gassner's "Fußlose Schale" subtype 2 cannot be identified with certainty as either a cup-skyphos or a stemless due to the poor preservation of its wall profile. Subtype 3 is surely a stemless. The distinction Gassner makes between "Fußlose Schalen" and "Schalenskyphoi" is the relative distance

between each of her types and stemless cups (which the “Fußlose Schalen” most resemble) or skyphoi (which the “Schalenskyphoi” approach).

<sup>12</sup> Tréziny makes no comment regarding the offsets found on the cup-skyphoi, though he does note the discussion of Cástulo cups by Shefton (1982) and Bonet and Jurado, and suggests, citing Villard (1959) that their production lasted until the first quarter of the fourth century.

<sup>13</sup> We would like to thank Elizabeth Baltes, who examined the cups in the Ioannina Museum for us in June 2012.

<sup>14</sup> Hill derided the notion that sharp ridges could be or were made by ancient metalsmiths (1947, 252). Admittedly, the edges of carinations found on extant Etruscan or Greek metal kantharoi, for example, while are not razor-sharp, do, however, clearly delineate a purposely marked change in profile (Knudsen, 31). See also Knudsen's discussion of ridges in Phrygian metalware (1961, 81-82). Her comparisons of eighth- and seventh-century metal wares and pottery demonstrate how potters often exaggerated sharp angles and flaring rims when transferring shapes from metal to ceramics (299-306, 313, 316); one could add the Middle Helladic tradition of MInyan Ware, with its carinations, burnished surfaces, ribbed stems, and strap handles.

<sup>15</sup> For an example of a dinos with ring attachments: Lyons 1996: pl. 43, pl. 84 no. 18-10, inv. No. 70-459, p. 194 (first quarter of 5<sup>th</sup> c.). For a carinated cup with high-swung handle from the necropolis, pl. 64, pl. 88 no. 32-8, p. 214 in. no 70-48 (last quarter of the 7<sup>th</sup> c.). There are numerous fragments of carinated cups in the unpublished material from the settlement.

<sup>16</sup> In support of his argument, Gill cited Kritias' list of excellent things and their origins, quoted in Athenaios 1.28b-c: “The Etruscan cup of wrought gold is best, as well as all the bronze which adorns the house, whatever its use.”

<sup>17</sup> Verzář (1973) has traced the evolution of the shape of the Nikosthenic amphora of around 580 BCE in bucchero from spiral-decorated Italic amphorai made in both metal and impasto. But the most characteristic details of the later jars were their broad strap handles and raised ridges on the upper belly, which are wholly metallic in origin. Tosto and van der Woude (1984, 163), however,

have denied that the Nikosthenic amphora was related to metal antecedents, claiming that the characteristic ribbing and strap handles were simply standard features of the Etruscan ceramic repertoire.

<sup>18</sup> The mugs are Inv. 821-822 in the Caltanissetta Archaeological Museum (Panvini 2006, 88-89). Examples are also on display in the Paestum museum.

<sup>19</sup> The original example of a cantharoid kotyle is Ashmolean 1928.32 (published by Beazley in CVA Oxford 2 65.4); a list of others can be found in Beazley (1928, 70 n. 8)

<sup>20</sup> Camp compared the cup to *Agora* XII.578, but as noted above (n. 6), that example has no offset.

<sup>21</sup> The ratio of the cup's height to its rim diameter is 1:2.45, relatively close to the norm established by Hatzidakis for stemless cups (1:2.5), but the ratio of its foot diameter to its rim diameter is 1:1.65, which is more appropriate for a cup-skyphos (1:1.6-1.74) than for a stemless cup (1:1.8) (Hatzidakis 1984, 17).